

**FREDERICKSBURG
RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes of July 15, 2010**

The July meeting of the Fredericksburg Recreation Commission was held on Thursday, July 15, 2010 at the Dorothy Hart Community Center. The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:05 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Tim Duffy, George Foster, Ken Kroko, and Susan Tyler. Absent: Commissioners Brian Baker, Charles McDaniel, and Barbara Miller-Richards. Also in attendance: Mr. Mark Whitley, Assistant City Manager, Wendy Stone and Patricia Sparks.

Election of Officers:

A motion was made by Commissioner Kroko, seconded by Commissioner Tyler and unanimously approved electing Commissioner Duffy as Chairman and Commissioner Foster as Vice Chairman for the 2011 term.

- I. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of June 17, 2010 were unanimously approved.
- II. **Public Comment:**

None
- III. **Communications from the Director:** The Commissioners reviewed the following reports:

Financial Report
Sports Report – June/July 2010
Leisure Report – July/August 2010

The Follow-up Report – Commissioner Kroko expressed his concerns in reference to the external funding for the Aquatic Center. He is not comfortable with the funding process. From year to year, we do not know if and how much external funding the City will receive for the pool from Mrs. Buffett. Wendy Stone reported that in previous years, Mrs. Buffett made donations that allowed City residents to swim free at Dixon Pool. Recently, a committee that consisted of City residents and City staff was formed to determine the funding process for the pool without external assistance. With the economic impact and budget constraints the Committee decided to approach Mrs. Buffett again for financial assistance. A commitment to extend funding for FY09 and FY10 was then made by Mrs. Buffett allowing City residents to swim free with the idea that once the economy recovers the City needs to stand on its own two feet.

Wendy Stone will submit a written report summarizing the funding process to date.

IV. Noteworthy Dates: The Commissioners reviewed upcoming programs and trips.

V. Old Business:

A. Pathways – No report.

B. Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation Partnership – Ground-breaking ceremony scheduled for August 9, 2010.

C. Riverfront Park – Wendy Stone reported that the Heritage Festival was the first real usage of the park with very few problems. The City Manager has authorized replacing the snow fencing along the rivers edge with a split rail fence. Two events are scheduled for this weekend and hopefully this will give staff an idea of the impact that the rentals will have on the park. Commissioner Tyler stated that it is not clear exactly where Riverfront Park is located. Wendy Stone reported that a proposal for signage has been submitted to the Riverfront Task Force. Once the Riverfront Task Force approves the signage, the proposal will then go to the ARB for approval. The proposal is for two freestanding sign poles that will hold two banners. The first sign will identify Riverfront Park with a phone number to call to receive more information. The second sign will identify upcoming events.

D. Dog Festival - Wendy Stone reported that the Dog Festival has made an appeal to the Commission to use the entire Riverfront Park. Mr. Jim Flippo, on behalf of the Dog Festival group, has evaluated the grassy area needed for the Dog Festival. He has made a verbal proposal to seed with bermuda after the Omelet Festival which would be some time next week. This will give us five weeks of growth before the Pride Festival is scheduled to have their event. The Dog Festival would be five weeks later. He also stated that he will be responsible for an above- ground watering system. No written proposal has been received to date.

E. Discussion on Commission Vacancy – The Recreation Commission currently has one vacancy. The Commissioners were encouraged to identify any potential candidates.

VI. New Business:

A. Website Concerns – Wendy Stone reported that since the City has changed over to a new website, Parks and Recreation staff has not been allowed to maintain, improve or control the Parks and Recreation website as needed.

Several requests by staff were made to the IT Department, however, all were rejected. A proposal was also made for a supplemental website, Fredparks.com. This supplemental site would allow Parks and Recreation Staff to maintain the brochure, and link to facebook and twitter marketing young teens and adults. Using Fredparks.com would be a great marketing tool for our programs. Once a person is ready to enroll in a program, a link would send them back to the official City website for enrollment. The IT Department also rejected this proposal. Wendy Stone stated that our website is not as productive as it could be and we are one of the few City departments that actually has a product to sell. The Commissioners agreed that there are valid concerns with IT and they encouraged Parks and Recreation Staff to continue making proposals to the IT Department. Wendy Stone stated that the surrounding localities also use facebook and twitter along with their official government site and it works with their environment. "Why not ours?" The Fire Department has recently purchased Fredericksburg Alert for the City. This website will meet some of our needs if we can encourage people to sign up. The Commissioners agreed that they would like a more definitive reason on why the supplemental website proposal was rejected. Commissioner Foster asked if there was an internal policy or City regulations that would prevent us from having a supplemental site. Mark Whitley stated that the IT concerns are more of an internal discussion. The IT department has varying missions, one of which is to support users and the users department with computer problems. They are also responsible for the integrity of the system. Mr. Whitley agreed to assist Parks and Recreation in the possibility of having a supplemental website. A report will be submitted at the September meeting.

- B. OMP Swimming Issue** – The Commissioners received a memorandum from Mr. Mark Whitley, Assistant City Manager, on the Rappahannock River Safety at Old Mill Park. The issue is "shall the City alter the status quo in regards to river safety at Old Mill Park?" Currently the status quo is that the City has placed multiple signs at OMP indicating the danger posed by the river to swimmers and waders. Across the river at Falmouth Beach, Stafford County personnel staff the beach from Memorial Day to Labor Day to warn swimmers of the potential danger and to handout life preservers. Mr. Whitley discussed several proposals to include:

Swimming prohibition at Old Mill Park. The City could potentially adopt a "park rule" prohibiting entry to the river from OMP and directing swimmers to Falmouth Beach. Signs and perhaps a cable would have to be placed at the

river's edge. A special permit would be allowed for the river outfitters to gain access from the river into Old Mill Park.

Stafford County/City of Fredericksburg Partnership.

Stafford County would like to partner with the City in having OMP manned by staff and offering life preservers to swimmers entering the river from Old Mill Park.

Restrict river entry based on certain levels. The river is unsafe at any level.

The Commissioners discussed options for OMP and they agreed to keep the status quo. This issue was brought before the Commission for input and comment only.

VII. Commission Concerns and Topics:

Commissioner Foster – none.

Commissioner Tyler asked when the Coke machines would be removed from the lobby. Wendy Stone reported that she is working diligently to get them out of the lobby. We are also getting estimates for a new water fountain. Commissioner Tyler stated the floors have been cleaned and waxed and they look great.

Commissioner Kroko stated that the pool funding is a concern. He also requested that he would like to have Zach Rainey attend the September meeting to discuss the pool season. He then asked if all hands are going to be on deck at the pool for "Dive in Movies." He has a real concern about crowd control at the pool. Commissioner Kroko also requested that Zach Rainey actually be there during the "Dive in Movies."

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Approved by the Recreation Commission

 _____ Wendy Stone, Division Manager	<u>9/17/2010</u> _____ Date
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Next Commission Meeting September 16, 2010 at Maury Commons, Suite 111.